OVERVIEW

Caseworkers must adhere to MiTEAM practice model principles when recommending court dismissal of temporary court wards or discharge of state wards. The child's safety and well-being are the primary considerations. When applicable, caseworkers must assess additional factors which include, but are not limited to:

- The parent/caregiver's ability to protect and provide for the child's ongoing needs.

- Resolution of the problem(s) which originally led to the child's removal.

- Permanency.

- The youth's adjustment in the community.

Definitions

Program closure

For the purpose of this item, program closure is the process of ending services provided through a specific child welfare program. The case may remain open if the child continues to receive services from another child welfare program.

Case closure

For the purpose of this item, case closure is the process of ending agency involvement with a family or child when the family and child are no longer receiving services from any child welfare program. Program closure and case closure occur simultaneously when there are no open program types remaining on the case.

PROGRAM CLOSURE
Cases with Court Involvement

To initiate foster care program closure for cases with court jurisdiction, the department must have a written court order terminating the department's supervision of the child(ren). The department must enter the court order terminating the department's supervision of the child(ren) in the electronic case management record within 10 calendar days of receipt of the court order and no later than 30 days from dismissal of court jurisdiction. The

department must close the foster care program type in the electronic case management system within 30 calendar days of entry of the court order in the electronic case management system. This only applies to temporary court wards. For MCI wards and former MCI wards the foster care case is not closed with the court order.

Delays in Receipt of the Written Court Order

The court speaks through written orders. The caseworker cannot close the program type in the electronic case management system based on a verbal order. **Caseworkers must request and make every effort to obtain a written order at the time of dismissal of court jurisdiction.** Failure to obtain a written court order may result in a discrepancy between the date of dismissal of jurisdiction and the date the department can close the program type.

Caseworkers are required to continue and document all case management activities and services to the child and family until a written court order is received by the department ending the department's supervision of the child. Caseworkers do not have the authority to require the child and/or family to continue participating in case management activities and services after dismissal of court jurisdiction, even if the written order has not yet been received by the department.

Cases Without Court Involvement

The department must close the foster care program type in the electronic case management record within 30 calendar days of receipt of the DHS-1476, Early Discharge of MCI Ward, or an approved DHS-1302, YAVFC Case Closure Request; see FOM 722-16, Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care. This would also include youth who are a legal status 51 and former MCI wards.

Child Death

In the event of the death of a child in foster care, the child's foster care program type must be closed in the electronic case management record within 30 calendar days of the date of death; see SRM 172, Child/Ward Death Alert Procedures and Timeframes.

**CASE
MANAGEMENT
ACTIVITY**

All case management activities, including completion of case service plans, caseworker contact requirements, etc., continue until one of the following documents is received:

- The written court order dismissing the case.
- An approved DHS-1476, Early Discharge of MCI Ward.
- An approved DHS-1302, YAVFC Case Closure Request.

Case Service Plans

Case service plans must document all case activity until the date the court order is received. If the program type is closed fewer than 30 calendar days after the last report period end date, then the DHS-69, Foster Care/Juvenile Justice Action Summary, may be completed in place of a final service plan; see FOM 722-08E, Foster Care/Juvenile Justice Action Summary.

**DHS-69, Foster
Care/Juvenile
Justice Action
Summary**

The DHS-69, Foster Care/Juvenile Justice Action Summary, must be completed at the time of program closure; see FOM 722-08E, Foster Care/Juvenile Justice Action Summary.

Medicaid Closure

Children are no longer eligible for foster care departmental ward Medicaid (MA-FCDW) after foster care program closure. The caseworker must ensure that the child's FCDW is closed at program closure; see FOM 803, Medicaid - Foster Care.

Note: The child's MA-FCDW may have closed prior to program closure if the child was no longer in an out-of-home placement, such as a parental home.

**Consumer Credit
Reports**

See FOM 722-06E, Consumer Credit Reports, for information regarding credit reports for youth exiting foster care.

**DISCHARGE
DOCUMENTS**

The caseworker must provide the following documents to the child's legal parent/guardian, or to the youth if the youth is age 18 or older or has been legally emancipated, at the time of closure:

- A certified copy of the child's birth certificate (retain a copy in the case record).

- The child's social security card.

Note: In cases where the social security number has been verified and documented per policy, the caseworker must make efforts to obtain a social security card.

- A copy of the child's updated DHS-221, Medical Passport; see FOM 801, Health Services for Children in Foster Care.

- Any available education records; see FOM 723, Educational Services.

- DHS-945, Financial Aid Verification of Court/State Ward Status, for youth ages 13 or older at the time of closure.

Note: The DHS-945 must be completed by a MDHHS caseworker. PAFC caseworkers must request a completed DHS-945 from the MDHHS monitoring caseworker.

- MDHHS-5748, Verification of Placement in Foster Care, for youth who were in foster care for at least 6 months after their 14th birthday.

**Youth Exiting Care
at Age 18 or Older
or to Emancipation**

In addition to the discharge documents listed above, the caseworker must also provide youth leaving foster at age 18 or older or after legal emancipation with the following:

- Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care (YAVFC) Fact Sheet, if the youth is not currently in the program.

- Information on Foster Care Transitional Medicaid; see FOM 803, Medicaid - Foster Care.

- MiHealth card and, if enrolled in a health plan, the youth's Medicaid Health Plan member ID card.

- [DHS-Pub-161, A Foster Youth's Guide to Preparing for Health Care Emergencies, Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care](#).

- [DHS Pub-858, Important Information for Youth Transitioning out of Foster Care](#).

Driver's License or State-Issued Photo Identification

The caseworker must ensure that youth leaving foster care at age 18 or older possess one of the following:

- Driver's license.
- State-issued photo identification card; see [FOM 722-03C, Older Youth: Preparation, Placement, and Discharge](#).

Adoptive Placement

The adoption caseworker is responsible for ensuring the adoptive placement receives all reasonably obtainable non-identifying information about the child; see [ADM 670, Required Information to be Shared](#). The foster care caseworker must provide the adoption caseworker with copies of any additional documents that have been obtained since the adoption referral; see [ADM 0210, Referral to Adoption](#).

CASE CLOSURE

Case closure is the electronic case management system process of closing the ongoing or permanent ward case in the system when there is no longer an open program type within the case.

Program and case closure occur simultaneously when program closure results in no remaining open program types within a case. Cases may remain open after program closure when additional programs remain open in the case. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Dual ward cases where the juvenile justice program closes but the child continues to be under court jurisdiction for abuse or neglect, or vice versa.

- Adoptive placement which results in the closure of the foster care program type while the adoption program type remains open for adoption supervision until finalization of the adoption.

Foster Care

When no program types remain open after the closure of the foster care program type, the caseworker must complete the case closure process in the electronic case management record. Caseworkers must utilize the Job Aid: Case Closure Requirements in the electronic case management system.

Adoption

The adoption case closure process differs from the foster care case closure process. MDHHS staff involved in the adoption case closure process should reference the electronic case management system Job Aid: Sealing and Closing an Adoption Case.

RETENTION OF CASE RECORDS

Temporary Wards

The closed foster care files for temporary wards must be retained in the local office until the youngest child turns 28 years old.

Foster care cases managed by a placement agency foster care (PAFC) provider must be retained by the agency for one year after the foster care program closure date. One year after the closure date, the PAFC must send the original file to the local DHHS office to combine and retain until the youngest child turns 28 years old.

For record disposal instructions, please refer to the Records Management Services website.

Permanent Court Wards/MCI Wards

For both MDHHS- and PAFC-supervised cases, the supervising agency must retain all foster care case files for one year after the case closure date. One year after the closure date, the PAFC must send the original file to the local MDHHS office that was responsible for the case; **copies must not be maintained by the PAFC.** The local MDHHS office must combine and forward all records (both MDHHS and PAFC) to the MDHHS Document Control Section for permanent retention.

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
Document Control Section
235 S. Grand Ave.

P.O. Box 30037

Lansing, MI 48909

Adoption

MDHHS provides a central location for the permanent retention of **all** records for children who have been adopted; see ADM 1030, Adoption Case Record Retention.

Note: For children who are adopted, the foster care record is combined with the adoption record.

Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care

For all Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care (YAVFC) cases, the retention schedule for the youth's wardship type, prior to entering YAVFC, should be followed.

LEGAL BASE
Federal Law

Social Security Act, 42 USC 675(5)(D).

Social Security Act, 42 USC 675(5)(I).

State Law

Foster Child Identification Theft Protection Act, 2016 PA 285, MCL 400.685.

Foster Care and Adoption Services Act, 1994 PA 203, MCL 722.954c(3).

Michigan Adoption Code, 1939 PA 288, MCL 710.27.

Licensing Rule

Mich Admin Code, R 400.12422.

Mich Admin Code, R 400.12509.

Mich Admin Code, R 400.12713.